

Time Out

New York

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Art

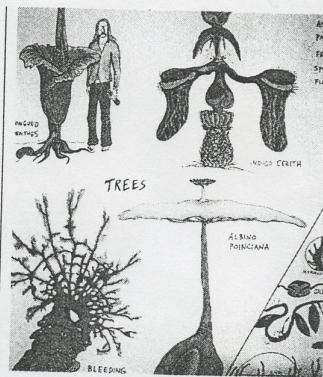
"Station to Station"

Artists Space, through May 24
(see Soho).

Part of Modernism's legacy, perhaps, is the value we continue to place on sketches or drawings as talismans of the very creative process that results in a painting or a sculpture. Interestingly, videos are not accorded the same fetishistic obsession with respect to their making. But that hasn't stopped artists Tony Oursler and Gary Simmons from attempting to connect drawing to the creation of videos in "Station to Station," a joint curatorial effort showcasing the work of nine local artists.

Three no-frills "stations"—a monitor and deck atop a cardboard box, surrounded by chairs—screen videos ranging in style from cyberpunk and public-access-generic to media-sampling montage. John Brattin's black-and-white video-noirs, for instance, use uncanny images and Hitchcock-like soundtracks to suggest a dark, psychological strain shooting through video technology (an idea paramount to Oursler's own work). Both of Dan Cooney's videos, *Pissing and Spitting*, plus Scott Gregory's *A Day After Jones Beach*, featuring skin-peeling, carry on the body/video art tradition of Bruce Nauman and Vito Acconci. And Sam Easter-son's *Hocus Focus* plays up the subjectivity of the camera; at one point, the artist takes his to a storefront psychic who predicts that the device will travel to many places and see many things.

But the show's selection of "drawings" relating to the videos is, well, sketchy. Gregory's wall of yellow post-it



Anne Kugler, detail from *Plant Matter and Glogrowths*, 1997.

notes looks promising at first, but turns out to be little more than infantile comments and doodles. Maura Jasper's grid of Polaroids is basically a hard-copy version of her *Karaoke Project* video, in which she tapes ordinary people expressing themselves through song.

Part of the problem is that Simmons and Oursler's criteria aren't really that clear. In a statement, Oursler makes vague claims for the artists' use of "historical" work methods, while Simmons goes on about how these videos are more about intimacy than about being grand.

In the end, the drawing-as-video-process thesis falls by the wayside. Even so, it's nice when established artists cheerlead for younger or lesser-known talents; that may be as good a reason as any for doing a show. —Martha Schwendener

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